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A Review of the Literature on Masculinity and Partner Violence

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There has been increasing interest in examining aspects of masculinity as potential predictors of partner violence. This review critically examined the literature on the relationship between masculinity and partner violence. Four distinct approaches to operationalizing masculinity were identified: trait approach, normative approach, gender role conflict approach, and indirect approach. Results generally supported a relationship between each domain of masculinity and partner violence, with the exception of the trait approach. Implications for future research include the importance of examining socialization processes in the development of masculinity and partner violence, being sensitive to methods for operationalizing masculinity, using a greater proportion of clinical samples of violent men, and testing masculine-related components of interventions to reduce partner violence.

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Intimate partner violence, defined as physical or psychological maltreatment perpetrated by men against women to gain control, power, or authority (American Psychological Association, 1996; Murphy & Cascardi, 1993), remains a prevalent global problem. Male intimate partners have physically assaulted 17%–38% of the world's women (United Nations, 1995). A national survey conducted in the United States showed that one of every eight marriages experienced some form of physical violence by the husband annually, and nearly twice that report at least one physically violent incident over the course of marriage (Straus & Gelles, 1988, 1990).

Given its detrimental effects, much effort has been directed at identifying predictors of partner violence. Although these efforts have explored a range of biological, social, and psychological correlates (see Holtzworth-Munroe, Bates, Smutzler, & Sandin, 1997, for review), increasing attention has focused on examining the association between masculinity and partner violence. Thus, this review aimed to critically examine the empirical data on the relationship between masculinity and partner violence and to discuss its implications for future research.

Theoretical explanations for the relationship between masculinity and partner violence have focused heavily on gender role socialization (Crowell & Burgess, 1996; Harway & O'Neil, 1999; Thorne-Finch, 1992). Some researchers have theorized that the process of masculine socialization and internalization of cultural expectations may produce a constriction of vulnerable emotions that continues into adulthood (e.g., Levant, 1996; Levant & Kopecky, 1995). Because anger is one of only a few emotions that masculine-socialized men perceive as acceptable to express, it may be the predominant emotion expressed during periods of distress, which may increase the likelihood of partner violence (Lisak, Hopper, & Song, 1996). This is similar to Long's (1987) notion of the "male emotional funnel system" in which men transform vulnerable emotions into anger repeatedly, which may lead to violence.

Other researchers have suggested that masculine socialization results in men feeling intense pressures to abide by gender role norms and that negative behaviors are considered responses to the conflict men experience in trying to adhere to dysfunctional gender role expectations (e.g., Eisler, 1995; O'Neil, Helms, Gable, David, & Wrightsman, 1986; O'Neil & Nadeau, 1999; Pleck, 1995). Still others have postulated that violence results from difficulty in developing a

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gender role identity because men are raised predominately by women, without strong emotional ties to their fathers (see Brooks & Silverstein, 1995, for review). Feminist theories suggest that negative male behaviors are a natural by-product of culture's acceptance of a patriarchal society. These theories incorporate social learning and sociocultural theories in influencing the process of learning to be violent, but they contend that partner violence is predominantly an act of dominance motivated by a strong need for power (see White & Kowalski, 1998, for review).

It is important to note that the aforementioned theoretical explanations cannot explain all intimate violence. Rather, masculine gender role socialization and conflict likely provide only part of the explanation for men's use of violence against women (O'Neil & Nadeau, 1999). Moreover, the construct of masculinity has various conceptualizations (e.g., Thompson & Pleck, 1995), partly because it encompasses a variety of qualities, including cognitions, values, emotions, and behavior. This is apparent when one recognizes the wide variety of terms associated with masculinity, including gender roles, gender role identity, sex roles, gender role strain, traditionalism, egalitarianism, gender role orientation, hypermasculinity, and masculinity ideology. Consequently, we agree with researchers who propose a multidimensional view of masculinity, one that espouses many masculinities (e.g., Levant, 1996; Thorne-Finch, 1992).

Given this multidimensional perspective, we believe the most informative method for examining the relationship between masculinity and partner violence is to focus on how researchers operationalize masculinity. Categorizing the empirical literature in this way allows for a critical review of the data in terms of measurement and provides a forum for drawing conclusions and issuing guidelines for future research. Our review identified four distinct, yet somewhat overlapping, approaches to operationalizing masculinity and its relationship to partner violence: (a) trait approach, (b) normative approach, (c) gender role stress/conflict approach, and (d) indirect approach. The following sections describe each of these approaches, the measures used to operationalize them, and the results from relevant studies using these measures.

Masculinity and Partner Violence

To be included in the present review, we required studies to be published in English and to directly examine the relationship between a domain of masculinity and men's verbal or physical violence against female partners. Thus, we excluded dissertation manuscripts, studies that reported combined results for men and women, and studies that examined only sexual aggression. Finally, we excluded reviewing measures within a particular domain of masculinity that were included in fewer than three published manuscripts. This allowed us to critically review the most used and well-validated measures in this area.

Trait Approach

The trait approach attempts to directly measure men's degree of masculinity/gender orientation through items that evaluate the extent to which learned notions of gender are incorporated into one's self-description (e.g., "I am . . . assertive, tough, etc."; Bem, 1984). It has been hypothesized that partner-violent men would report a more traditional masculine orientation or schema than nonviolent men (Sugarman & Frankel, 1996; Thompson, 1991). Studies assessing men's sex-role orientations most commonly used the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI; Bem, 1984), the Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ; Spence, Helmreich, & Holahan, 1979), and the Hypermasculinity Inventory (HMI; Mosher & Sirkin, 1984). The BSRI is a 60-item self-report measure of personality traits associated with masculine, feminine, androgynous (i.e., elevated on both masculine and feminine traits), or undifferentiated (i.e., low endorsement of masculine and feminine traits) traits. The BSRI has excellent internal consistency (αs = .80–.86), test–retest reliability (r = .90), and convergent validity (rs = .25–.42) with the Masculinity–Femininity scale of the California Personality Inventory (Bem, 1984).

Among the five studies using the BSRI, K. H. Coleman, Weinman, and Hsi (1980) compared gender role orientations and use of marital violence among 30 maritally violent and 60 nonviolent couples. Results showed no significant differences between men in each group in terms of proportion categorized into each gender role

orientation or their respective scores on each category. Bernard, Bernard, and Bernard (1985) administered the BSRI to 24 nonviolent and 15 violent college men. Men who reported being abusive toward an intimate dating partner were more often sex-typed as masculine than nonviolent men. Worth, Matthews, and Coleman (1990) examined 31 college men's BSRI scores and experiences of dating violence. They found that violent and nonviolent men evidenced similar masculinity scores, but violent men endorsed significantly fewer feminine characteristics than nonviolent men. Thompson (1991) administered the BSRI to 182 college men and found that men who engaged in violence against a dating partner had significantly higher masculinity scores than nonviolent men; no differences emerged for femininity scores. Finally, Haj-Yahia and Edleson (1994) examined the relationship between gender role orientation and men's use of verbal and physical violence against their fiancées. Regression analysis showed that scores on the BSRI did not significantly predict use of verbal or physical aggression, but results did not indicate which scale(s) of the BSRI were used. Overall, the only consistent finding across studies was that abusive men never endorsed more feminine traits than nonabusive men, suggesting that masculinity as measured by the BSRI was not clearly related to partner violence.

The PAQ also assesses characteristics typically associated with being male or female. There are two widely used versions of the PAQ: a 24-item version (Spence & Helmreich, 1978; Spence, Helmreich, & Stapp, 1973) that assesses socially desirable characteristics of men and women and a 28-item version (Spence et al., 1979) that also evaluates undesirable characteristics of men and women. Both versions include a Masculinity–Femininity scale, which provides a bipolar single-dimension score for gender. Much like the BSRI, the PAQ allows for the classification of traits as being masculine, feminine, androgynous, and undifferentiated.

Using the original version of the PAQ, Rosenbaum (1986) found that physically abusive husbands were more likely to score low on positive masculinity, less likely to be classified as androgynous, and more likely to be classified as undifferentiated than maritally discordant and satisfactorily married husbands; the control groups did not differ. Stets and Pirog-Good (1987) examined the gender orientation and violent tactics used by 207 college men assessed with the original PAQ. They found that men's positive femininity scores significantly predicted men's use of dating violence. Positive masculinity scores were not related to men's use of violence.

Using the same sample as the previous study, Burke, Stets, and Pirog-Good (1988) examined the utility of a modified version of the PAQ. Specifically, items on the PAQ were entered into a discriminant function analysis to determine the items that best discriminated between "the meaning of male selves and female selves" (Burke et al., 1988, p. 277). The authors strived to create a one-dimensional PAQ that best assessed the relationship between gender role orientation and violence. Results showed that endorsing a less masculine gender identity (thus, a more feminine identity) was predictive of dating violence. Boye-Beaman, Leonard, and Senchak (1993) examined premarital aggression and gender identity among Black and White couples. Results showed that White husbands who were identified as feminine or androgynous reported lower levels of aggression than White men identified as masculine or undifferentiated. There were no differences in partner violence on the basis of Black men's gender identity.

More recently, Jenkins and Aube (2002) examined the relationship between the revised version of the PAQ and dating aggression among college men. Results showed that negative masculinity scores uniquely predicted increases in the frequency of physical and psychological aggression against female partners. In contrast, positive masculinity scores predicted lower frequency and severity of all forms of aggression, except severity of physical aggression. No significant effects emerged for femininity scores.

In general, results from studies using the PAQ found no consistent relationship with partner violence. Findings do not suggest that high positive masculinity scores decreased the risk for violence given that they may be related to the ability to control emotion or that high femininity scores increased the risk for violence given the relation to potential need for control and potential heightened emotional responding during conflict (Stets & Pirog-Good, 1987). Moreover, results suggest that masculinity as

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measured by the PAQ may be unrelated to violence.

Finally, the HMI is composed of 30 forced-choice items (e.g., "Some women are good for only one thing" vs. "All women deserve the same respect as your own mother"). The HMI measures three dimensions of hypermasculinity (i.e., calloused sexual attitudes, violence as manly, danger as exciting). The HMI has been operationalized and administered to assess both men's gender role orientation and their adherence to the male gender role (Ray & Gold, 1996; Thompson & Pleck, 1995).

To date, three studies have examined the relationship between hypermasculinity and partner violence. Ray and Gold (1996) found no significant relationship between hypermasculinity and men's use of verbal or physical aggression in dating relationships. Suarez-Al-Adam, Raffaelli, and O'Leary (2000) examined the relationship between women's perceptions of their male partners' hypermasculinity and use of verbal and physical abuse. Results revealed strong positive correlations (i.e., *r*s = .54–.74) between the three subscales of the HMI and women's reports of experiencing verbal and physical violence. Parrott and Zeichner (2003) found that high hypermasculine men displayed higher levels of aggression in the lab on the basis of a significantly greater level and duration of shock administered in response to provocation from a female confederate than low hypermasculine men. Moreover, a significantly greater proportion of high hypermasculine men (83%) engaged in at least one act of intimate partner physical aggression in the past year compared with low hypermasculine men (46%).

Given the mixed findings from these studies and the fact that one study was based on women's reports, no firm conclusions can be drawn at this point. The inconsistent findings may be related to the fact that the HMI is a measure of both gender orientation and adherence to gender role norms. Specifically, some men may endorse a hypermasculine orientation but not adhere to that norm, whereas other men may demonstrate both an orientation and adherence.

Taken together, results from studies that used the BSRI, PAQ, and HMI were generally mixed. Given that these measures were well validated and have been widely used, it does not appear that these measures are inadequate indices of masculinity, as operationalized by men's gender role orientation. However, it does suggest that measuring the relationship between masculinity and partner violence via gender role orientation may not be particularly informative.

Normative Approach

The normative approach contends that masculinity is "a culturally based ideology scripting gender relations, attitudes, and beliefs" (see Thompson & Pleck, 1995, p. 130, for review). Rather than examining how men describe themselves, this approach examines masculinity in terms of men's beliefs about how men and women should think, feel, and behave, as well as their rights and roles in society (e.g., "Men *should be* . . . assertive, tough, etc."). In terms of partner violence, men who hold traditional values and expectations regarding appropriate gendered behavior may engage in partner violence when expectations regarding partner behavior are violated or the man perceives violence as justifiable to maintain the expectations of male behavior (e.g., Eisler, 1995; Marshall, 1993). Measures tapping the normative approach of masculinity include the Male Role Norms Scale (MRNS), the Attitudes Toward Women Scale (ATW), and the Sex-Role Egalitarianism Scale (SRE). Other measures assessing the normative approach were considered (e.g., Male Role Norms Inventory, Macho Scale) but were excluded because each measure was included in only one published study on partner violence.

The MRNS (Thompson & Pleck, 1986) measures traditional masculine ideology on the basis of three basic dimensions (i.e., status, toughness, antifemininity). It is a measure of approval of norms and values that describe the male role (Thompson & Pleck, 1995). The MRNS evidences excellent psychometric properties, is not correlated with the BSRI, and predicts use of psychologically coercive behavior against an intimate partner after controlling for gender role orientation and attitudes toward women (Thompson, 1990).

Using the MRNS, Good, Hepper, Hillenbrand-Gunn, and Wang (1995) found that holding more traditional norms for men was a significant unique predictor of psychological aggression against a partner; physical violence was not assessed in this study. Similarly, Jenkins and Aube (2002) found that the MRNS

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significantly predicted psychological aggression against a dating partner. However, the MRNS did not predict the use of physical aggression in this sample. Finally, Jakupcak, Lisak, and Roemer (2002) found that the MRNS was not correlated with dating violence. However, this study combined verbal and physical aggression into one scale. Although combining these scales was based on the notion of a continuum of violence and allowed for efficient testing of a relationship between levels of violence and the MRNS, it may be that partitioning measures of violence into psychological and physical components is particularly important with the MRNS. Although additional research would clarify this question, these findings suggest that the MRNS may be suitable for measuring the relationship between beliefs about the male role and psychological violence in dating relationships. Given that the reviewed studies used college samples and failed to find effects for physical violence, the utility of this measure for use in marital and community samples is currently unknown.

The SRE (Beere, King, Beere, & King, 1984) is a 95-item self-report inventory measuring attitudes toward nontraditional gender role behaviors, with lower scores reflecting more traditional sex-role attitudes (Crossman, Stith, & Bender, 1990). Reliability of this measure is adequate, as evidenced by high internal consistency (.97), as well as concurrently valid, as evidenced by a significant positive correlation with the ATW (Beere et al., 1984; King & King, 1985, as reported in Stith & Farley, 1993).

Stith and colleagues conducted two of the three studies comparing SRE scores with use of violence. Stith (1990) recruited 72 male police officers to examine their sex-role egalitarianism and use of violence in their intimate relationships. Results showed that SRE scores did not significantly correlate with or predict physical violence against wives. Crossman et al. (1990) and Stith and Farley (1993) recruited men in treatment for violence or alcoholism and found that SRE scores were a significant unique predictor of men using "severe violence" (e.g., beat partner up) against an intimate partner but not "minor violence." In a recent study, Schubert, Protinsky, and Viers (2002) recruited men from anger management groups, church groups, counseling centers, and so forth. SRE scores were found to be a significant predictor of physical injuries, indicating that men with less egalitarianism were more likely to engage in physical violence that caused injury to female partners than men with more egalitarianism. Results did not reveal any significant relationships between the SRE and prevalence or frequency of physical assault.

Compared with other measures reviewed thus far, the studies using the SRE involved noncollege samples. However, results from these studies did not reveal any consistent relationship between sex-role egalitarianism and partner violence. This suggests that sex-role egalitarianism may not be an important predictor of partner violence. Unlike the MRNS, the SRE provides a single index of men's beliefs about both men and women, which may obscure a relationship with partner violence that might emerge when beliefs about men and women are analyzed separately.

The ATW (Spence & Helmreich, 1972; Spence et al., 1973) is the most widely used measure assessing the relationship between beliefs about female sex roles and partner violence ($N = 12$ studies). Respondents indicate their level of agreement with each item (e.g., "A woman who refuses to bear children has failed in her duty to her husband"), with lower scores indicating more conservative attitudes. Most studies reviewed below used a 25-item version, which correlates .97 with the original scale (Spence et al., 1973). The ATW has demonstrated adequate psychometrics (e.g., Kilpatrick & Smith, 1974).

Rosenbaum and O'Leary (1981) recruited 32 physically abused wives in treatment without their husbands, 20 abused wives being seen with their husbands in conjoint therapy, and 40 nonabused wives. Wives' reports of their husbands' attitudes toward women indicated that abused wives in individual treatment reported that their husbands held significantly more conservative attitudes toward women than abused wives in conjoint therapy and control groups, which did not differ from each other. Walker (1984) found that abused women perceived batterers as having more traditional attitudes toward women's roles than nonbatterers, although statistical tests were not performed. Sigelman, Berry, and Wiles (1984) found that ATW scores were negatively correlated with the use of physical violence in dating relationships, but ATW

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scores did not predict partner violence after accounting for age, income, social desirability, and history of being abused as a child. Neidig, Friedman, and Collins (1986) used the Empathy subscale of the ATW among a sample of male military service members and found that men who reported spousal violence did not differ in ATW scores compared with nonviolent control groups.

Johnston (1988) assessed ATW scores among men court ordered to attend violence treatment, self-reported abusers from clinics, and nonabusers. Results indicated that all three groups evidenced similar attitudes toward women. Alexander, Moore, and Alexander (1991) found that physical violence in a dating relationship was negatively correlated ($r = -.48$) with lower ATW scores, indicating that more conservative attitudes toward women were associated with more physical violence. However, additional tests using regression analyses indicated that men's use of physical and verbal abuse was not predicted by their attitudes toward women.

Similar to Neidig et al. (1986), Hurlbert, Whittaker, and Munoz (1991) recruited male military personnel and found that abusive husbands scored lower on the ATW than nonabusive husbands. Ryan (1995) conducted two studies evaluating ATW scores among aggressive and nonaggressive college men. The first study found no difference in ATW scores between groups, and ATW scores did not predict aggression. Ryan suggested the lack of findings may have been related to study recruitment; the research was advertised as a study on attitudes toward women, which "may have influenced the respondents to report more liberal attitudes toward women and it may have influenced their responses on other questions" (Ryan, 1995, p. 106). The second study avoided this terminology, and results showed that men categorized as aggressive were more traditional in their attitudes toward women than nonaggressive men.

Haj-Yahia and Edleson (1994) examined the relationship between attitudes toward women and engaged men's use of physical violence. Regression analysis showed that negative attitudes toward women predicted verbal aggression after controlling for childhood abuse and empathic understanding but did not predict physical aggression. Hastings (2000) found that ATW scores were not predictive of either verbal or physical abuse. Finally, in a sample of college students, Reitzel-Jaffe and Wolfe (2001) used structural equation modeling that included a factor regarding negative beliefs about gender and violence, which included the ATW, and found that more conservative attitudes were predictive of greater emotional and physical violence.

Among these 12 studies, only one showed clear evidence that abusive men held more traditional attitudes about women than nonabusive men (Hurlbert et al., 1991). Five studies revealed some positive findings, such as a positive correlation or a predictive effect of ATW on verbal aggression but not physical aggression. The remaining studies found no significant differences between groups on the ATW or found that scores on the ATW did not predict the use of violence. This inconsistency does not appear to be related to population differences because a number of the studies that evidenced null findings were college, community, and treatment samples. The findings suggest that attitudes toward women may not be related to violence.

Overall, studies that used the MRNS, SRE, and ATW as measures of a normative approach to operationalizing masculinity revealed mixed findings. Results generally supported a relationship between the MRNS and the use of psychological aggression among college samples. However, studies using the SRE and ATW evidenced mixed results or failed to support a relationship between normative aspects of masculinity and partner violence. One potential interpretation of these findings relates to measurement differences. The MRNS assesses men's approval of norms for the male role, whereas the SRE provides an index of men's attitudes toward male and female behavior combined (the scale does not provide separate subscale scores for attitudes toward male and female behavior) and the ATW assesses only attitudes toward women. This suggests that within the normative approach to the study of masculinity, men's beliefs about appropriate male behavior may be more predictive of partner violence than their beliefs about acceptable female behavior, and the SRE as a single index of attitudes toward both genders may minimize the likelihood of finding effects for partner violence.

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Gender Role Stress/Conflict Approach

This approach is based on the gender role conflict/strain paradigm originally formulated by Pleck (1981, 1995). This paradigm postulates that gender roles are inconsistent, ever changing, and often violated by men, resulting in negative psychological consequences and overcompensation through the use of dysfunctional behaviors (e.g., violence) to meet gender role expectations (Brooks & Silverstein, 1995; Levant, 1996). Thus, when faced with perceived or actual challenges to their masculine gender role ideology, some men may experience significant conflict or stress and engage in traditionally masculine behaviors (e.g., violence) to maintain their sense of control and power (Eisler, 1995; Marshall, 1993). This approach may be viewed as related to the normative approach discussed above, given that both are based on the notion that challenges to masculine gender role expectations lead to violence; however, this approach is unique in that it directly assesses the degree of conflict and stress men would experience when gender role norms are challenged.

Measures assessing this approach include the Gender Role Conflict Scale (GRCS; O'Neil et al., 1986) and the Masculine Gender Role Stress Scale (MGRS; Eisler & Skidmore, 1987). Both measures assess "the extent to which males feel that violating traditional masculinity ideologies is uncomfortable or stressful for them" (Thompson & Pleck, 1995, p. 156). The GRCS was excluded from this review because of a lack of sufficient published studies to conduct a meaningful review examining its relation to partner verbal or physical violence. However, the GRCS has been used extensively in studying aspects of masculinity (see Thompson & Pleck, 1995, for review), including the relationship between masculinity and sexual aggression (e.g., Rando, Rogers, & Brittan-Powell, 1998).

The MGRS includes 40 items that require men to state the degree to which they cognitively appraise how stressful/threatening situations are for them (e.g., "Being outperformed at work by a woman"). Higher scores reflect greater perceived stress or threat. The MGRS has adequate test–retest reliability ($r = .93$) and internal consistency (coefficient $\alpha = .90$; Eisler, Skidmore, & Ward, 1988). Support for the construct validity of the MGRS is adequate, and previous studies using the MGRS have indicated positive correlations with men's reports of anger, anxiety, and engaging in risky health behavior (see Eisler, 1995, for review).

Eisler, Franchina, Moore, Honeycutt, and Rhatigan (2000) assessed college men's aggressive responses to masculine gender-relevant and masculine gender-irrelevant vignettes involving disputes with their partners. Results showed that high MGRS men endorsed greater use of verbal and physical violence than did low MGRS men in both types of vignettes. Similarly, Franchina, Eisler, and Moore (2001) showed that high MGRS college men endorsed using verbal aggression toward their intimate partners more often than did low MGRS men in situations that threatened masculine gender roles but not in situations that were considered nonthreatening to masculine gender roles. However, these studies did not assess actual use of violence.

Copenhaver, Lash, and Eisler (2000) examined the relationship between MGRS and intimate abuse among a sample of substance-abusing male veterans. They found a moderate correlation between MGRS and partner violence ($r = .44$) and that high MGRS men reported greater use of abusive behaviors than did low MGRS men. However, this study also showed that MGRS scores did not account for a significant amount of the variance in violence after controlling for trait anger. Finally, Jakupcak et al. (2002) found that MGRS scores significantly predicted violence in dating relationships above and beyond the effects of family income and masculine ideology. However, an interaction between MGRS and masculine ideology indicated that at higher levels of masculine ideology, greater MGRS was associated with higher levels of violence.

Taken together, research conducted to date shows moderate support for an association between gender role stress and partner violence. The consistent and positive relationship between gender role stress and the use of verbal and physical conflict tactics in relationships suggests that the level of men's appraisal of stress and threat to situations that challenge masculine norms may be a critical component in understanding why some men behave violently. As revealed by Jakupcak et al. (2002), it may also be that high gender role stress is particularly predictive of being violent in a relationship when men also espouse a traditional masculin-

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ity. However, it is also important to note that in the only noncollege sample, MGRS did not account for a significant amount of the variance in partner violence after accounting for trait anger (Copenhaver et al., 2000). Given this finding and the positive correlation between MGRS and anger scores found during initial tests of validation with the MGRS (Eisler, 1995), it is suggested that the MGRS and anger share common variance in predicting partner violence and that one of these variables may mediate the relationship between the other variable and partner violence.

Indirect Approach

The final approach involves linking masculinity and partner violence via indirect measures of masculinity, such as positive attitudes toward violence and a high need for power and control in relationships. Sugarman and Frankel (1996) contended that approval of violence comprises one component of a patriarchal ideology in which violence against women is condoned. Thus, a positive attitude toward violence may reflect men's ascription to patriarchal norms regarding appropriate male behavior and relate to an increased likelihood of violence. Measures assessing this approach include the Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scale (AIV) and the Inventory of Beliefs About Wife Beating (IBWB). Similarly, Levant et al. (1992) indicated that one core characteristic of masculinity is the avoidance of appearing weak, suggesting that maintaining power and control in interpersonal situations may be important to men. Thus, men may use violence to modify female partner behavior (M. P. Johnson, 1995). The only measure included in this review that measured this construct was the Marital Power and Decision Making Scale (DMS). We considered reviewing measures assessing hostility toward women and relationships (e.g., Adversarial Sexual Beliefs Scale, Hostility Toward Women Scale) because some researchers operationalized these constructs as measuring attitudes supporting violence. However, our review indicated that they did not assess attitudes supporting violence but rather calloused and negative attitudes toward women and relationships (e.g., Holtzworth-Munroe, Meehan, Herron, Rehman, & Stuart, 2000). Thus, we excluded these measures from the review.

The AIV (Burt, 1980) is a six-item inventory that measures the level of agreement with violent attitudes and behaviors toward women, with lower scores indicating greater acceptance of violence. Cronbach's alpha for the scale is somewhat low (.59; Burt, 1980). Dewhurst, Moore, and Alfano (1992) recruited men in a batterers' group and men from the community. Results revealed that batterers and violent men from the community did not differ from each other or the nonviolent comparison group on attitudes toward interpersonal violence. Holtzworth-Munroe et al. (2000) compared the AIV scores among two control groups (nonviolent/nondistressed and nonviolent/distressed) and four subtypes of violent men (family only, low-level antisocial, borderline dysphoric, and generally violent/antisocial). Results showed that the borderline dysphoric men reported greater acceptance of interpersonal violence than family only men and both nonviolent control groups. However, the three remaining violent groups did not differ significantly in their attitudes toward interpersonal violence amongst each other or the control conditions.

Reitzel-Jaffe and Wolfe (2001) conducted structural equation modeling in a sample of college students and showed that a factor regarding negative beliefs about gender and violence (which included the AIV) was significantly related to the use of emotional and physical abuse. Finally, Carr and VanDeusen (2002) found that AIV scores were correlated with violence scores, but attitudes toward violence did not predict use of violence in a dating relationship after accounting for hostility toward women, witnessing interparental violence, and experiencing child abuse.

Although it is generally presumed that attitudes that support the use of violence will increase the risk for violent behavior, and past reviews provide evidence for this conclusion (see Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 1997, for review), evidence based on the AIV contradicts this contention. None of the studies using the AIV found more than partial support (e.g., correlation) relating attitudes to actual violence in the present review. This suggests that (a) attitudes toward violence and actual use of violence are not as strongly related as past evidence suggests, (b) the AIV is a less psychometrically sound measure of violence attitudes, (c) attitudes toward violence as an indirect measure of

masculinity is not supported, and/or (d) masculinity is not related to partner violence when masculinity is operationalized on the basis of attitudes toward violence.

The IBWB (Saunders, Lynch, Grayson, & Linz, 1987) is a 41-item self-report measure assessing attitudes about wife beating. This inventory differs from the AIV in that it focuses specifically on wife beating attitudes rather than general attitudes toward interpersonal violence against women. The IBWB demonstrates adequate internal consistency and construct validity, as established through demonstrated correlations with the ATW (Saunders et al., 1987).

Saunders et al. (1987) compared IBWB scores of batterers, advocates for battered women, and male and female students. Results showed that compared with advocates, batterers were more likely to believe that wife beating is justified and victims gain from abuse and were less likely to believe that help should be given to women, the offender is responsible, and divorce and jail are acceptable actions for abusing a wife. Comparisons with male students showed that abusers were less likely to believe the offender was responsible or should be punished. Stith (1990) examined the beliefs of wife beating among male police officers using an earlier version of the IBWB that assessed only the justification and acceptability of violence (Saunders, 1980). Results showed that police officers' attitudes supporting marital violence was the best predictor ($B = .63$) of marital violence. In addition, results showed an interaction with approval of marital violence and marital stress, such that high marital stress increased the association between approval of wife beating and use of violence. Crossman et al. (1990) and Stith and Farley (1993) recruited men in treatment for violence or alcoholism. The overall multivariate test with approval of marital violence scores and other dependent measures did not reveal significant group differences, but results from the combined sample showed that approval of wife beating was a significant predictor of men using "severe violence" (e.g., beat partner up) against an intimate partner after accounting for sex-role egalitarianism.

Eisikovits, Edleson, Guttman, and Sela-Amit (1991) found that violent men were more supportive of wife beating than nonviolent men and that IBWB total scores significantly correlated with the use of physical violence ($r = -.39$), demonstrating that greater support for wife beating was related to physical violence against wives. In a sample of male students, Silverman and Williamson (1997) found that past and current use of physical violence against an intimate partner were significantly correlated with the belief that wife beating is justified (rs = .43–.44) and that batterers are not responsible (rs = .22–.29). Results also showed that the belief that battering is justified was a direct predictor of past and current female partner physical violence. Holtzworth-Munroe et al. (2000) compared the IBWB scores (11-item short form examining only justification of wife beating) among two control groups and the four subtypes of violent men described earlier. Results showed that the borderline dysphoric and generally violent/antisocial men reported greater justification of wife beating than both nonviolent control groups. No other differences were observed.

Taken together, four out of six studies showed strong support for a relationship between greater justification for violence against wives and the actual use of violence. Although the remaining two studies revealed mixed support for this relationship, the evidence suggests that the IBWB reliably captures the relationship between justification in wife beating and actual behavior. Perhaps the utility and strength of this measure in comparison to the AIV is in its focus on wife beating as compared with violence against women more generally. In relation to masculinity, it may be that one of the prevailing norms for men is that it is more acceptable to use violence against an intimate partner than against women in other types of relationships.

Finally, in relation to issues of power and control in relationships, only the DMS originally developed by Blood and Wolfe (1960) has been used repeatedly in research on partner violence. This measure assesses which relationship partner has the power to make decisions in the relationship or who has the final say in matters, such as amount of money spent on food, having children, and whether a partner should go to work or stay home. The measure has satisfactory reliability and validity (Bahr, 1973; D. H. Coleman & Straus, 1986), and higher total scores reflect greater husband decision-making power.

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D. H. Coleman and Straus (1986, 1990) developed a typology of marital power types (i.e., male dominant, female dominant, equalitarian, and divided power) using this measure by

> cross-classifying a measure of the extent to which the husband versus the wife tend to have the "final say" in family decisions (the "Decision Power Index") by the degree to which husband and wife share in making decisions (the "Shared Power Index"). (D. H. Coleman & Straus, 1990, p. 289)

The difference between equalitarian and divided-power couples is that equalitarian couples jointly decide on issues whereas divided-power couples split the decision-making responsibility. Results from a national sample showed that male-dominant couples were more often categorized as experiencing "high conflict" on the basis of a measure of spousal agreement on a number of relationship issues than all other types of couples. Moreover, results showed that minor violence was greater among male-dominant, female-dominant, and divided-power couples than equalitarian couples. Using the same nationally representative data set, Straus (1990) found that the assault rate was 16.1% when husbands had decision-making power versus 5.2% for couples who share decisions, and Yllo (1984) found that less than 3.0% of equalitarian couples had a severe violent episode compared with 7.1% among wife-dominant couples and 10.7% among husband-dominant couples.

Newark, Harrell, and Salem (1995) recruited a sample of 210 women involved in family court cases and found that abused women perceived their partners as having more decision-making power than nonabused women. Tang (1999) examined the decision-making power and use of violence among a national sample and found that women's reports of husband verbal aggression were highest among husband-dominant couples and that minor physical aggression was highest among wife-dominant couples followed by husband-dominant couples, compared with equalitarian and divided-power couples. Kim and Sung (2000) used logistic regression analyses and showed that male-dominant relationships were the most predictive of an increased likelihood of male-to-female violence. Finally, Kim and Emery (2003) found that husband-to-wife violence was significantly greater in male-dominant and, to a lesser extent, divided-power marriages compared with equalitarian marriages, with female-dominant marriages falling between these groups (this study did not clarify whether findings were based on husband and/or wife report).

Results from the aforementioned studies generally supported a relationship between decision-making power and partner violence, such that male-dominant couples tend to experience the greatest rates of partner violence compared with other couples types. However, female-dominant couples also tend to experience higher rates of partner violence than equalitarian and divided-power relationships, and one study showed that female-dominant couples experience greater violence against female partners than male-dominant couples (Tang, 1999). These findings suggest that power imbalance, regardless of which spouse has greater power, may be a critical variable in predicting partner violence (see Germain, 2001; Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 1997, for reviews). Given that power and control likely comprise one component of masculinity, it may be that men's use of violence in male-dominant relationships serves to maintain power and control whereas partner violence in female-dominant relationships serves to attempt to obtain control.

Discussion

The purpose of this review was to examine the relationship between masculinity and partner violence on the basis of the manner in which researchers operationalized masculinity. The general finding from this review was that some of the approaches to operationalizing masculinity demonstrated a moderate or strong relationship with partner violence whereas others revealed mixed or null findings. Our review of 10 measures indicates that 4 evidenced a moderate to strong relationship between masculinity and partner violence (i.e., MRNS, MGRS, IBWB, and DMS) and 6 revealed mixed or null results (i.e., BSRI, PAQ, HMI, ATW, SRE, and AIV).

Among the measures that evidenced a positive association with partner violence, the measures most consistently associated with partner violence were the MGRS, the IBWB, and the DMS. As stated earlier, the lack of association between the AIV compared with the strong association between the IBWB and partner violence may reflect the focus of the latter measure on acceptance of violence specific to partners

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rather than all women. This suggests that future research focused on examining men's beliefs about violence in intimate relationships should use the IBWB if the research question focuses on attitudes toward partner violence. The MGRS and DMS were consistently related to partner violence. Men may use violence when challenges to masculinity arise and/or men feel the need to maintain male power. The MGRS reflects the stress men experience when masculinity is challenged, and the DMS reflects men's relative level of power in relationships, both of which may be predictors of men perceiving threats to masculine power in conflictual situations and their violent responses.

Although less consistently associated with partner violence, the MRNS was associated with psychological aggression among college samples. The MRNS may be useful in examining the relationship between masculinity ideology and psychological aggression but may be less predictive of more extreme forms of violence. This suggests that college men's expectations about appropriate male behavior allows for psychologically aggressive behavior but does not extend to using physical violence in relationships or that college men may espouse traditional beliefs for men but not adhere to those beliefs to the point of becoming physically violent. This is further supported by Jakupcak et al. (2002), who showed that partner violence was predicted by the interaction between masculinity ideology and gender role stress, such that at higher levels of masculine ideology, higher levels of gender role stress were related to increased violence. As with the MGRS, the findings on the MRNS and the interaction between ideology and stress were consistent with the notion that violence may be a response to the perceived need to adhere to dysfunctional gender role expectations (Eisler, 1995; Pleck, 1995).

The ATW was the most frequently used measure in this review, but only one of 12 studies supported the notion that traditional attitudes toward women are related to the use of violence. This potentially suggests that attitudes toward women's rights and roles are not as relevant to understanding violent behavior as how men respond to situations in which they feel challenged or threatened in conflicts with women. The SRE also failed to evidence a consistent relationship with partner violence. As mentioned earlier, these normative measures differed from the MRNS on the basis of whether beliefs about men, women, or both were assessed. The findings suggest that men's beliefs about male gender role expectations may be the critical normative component in predicting psychological aggression.

In relation to the four approaches to operationalizing masculinity, this review demonstrated little support for a relationship between the three trait approach measures of masculinity and use of partner violence. When compared with other approaches, one interpretation of the lack of consistent findings of trait measures is that the degree to which masculinity is related to partner violence may be more related to the beliefs men hold about appropriate male behavior, the conflict men experience when traditional masculinity is challenged, and relative power in relationships, as opposed to the adjectives or characteristics men ascribe to themselves. In other words, a man may describe himself as tough, powerful, and in control, but these characteristics may only be relevant to partner violence when considering the extent to which he feels that toughness and power are important to him and the extent to which he experiences stress or conflict when he perceives a challenge to his toughness and power.

Implications for Future Research

This review leads to several implications for future research and interventions with men. First, we contend that this review highlights the need for future research to focus on examining the interaction between men's gender role expectations that they hold for themselves and the stress and conflict they experience when faced with intimate conflict situations that challenge male power and control. It is these components of masculinity that we believe are most relevant in predicting whether men will engage in partner violence. This also emphasizes the need to better understand the process of socialization as it relates to the development of masculine gender roles and violent behavior. However, this area of study remains largely uncharted, and longitudinal research is desperately needed to understand developmental predictors of violent behavior to create programs and strategies to reduce partner violence. Moreover, the studies reviewed herein were cross-sectional, and it

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seems important to begin conducting longitudinal research examining the relationship between masculinity and partner violence. It may be that as men reach middle and late adulthood, their need for control and power and their adherence to gender role norms diminish, potentially decreasing the likelihood of violence.

Second, this review demonstrates the need to conduct research on masculinity and partner violence that is sensitive to the methods by which masculinity is operationalized. Specifically, researchers interested in linking masculinity and partner violence might initially be inclined to use either the BSRI or the PAQ, given their extensive use in gender-related research and the notion that masculinity would seem best captured through the self-ascription of traits typically associated with men and women. However, this review cautions against using these measures when studying the relationship between masculinity and partner violence and instead suggests using measures that assess men's beliefs about appropriate male behavior, gender role stress/conflict, and relative relationship power.

Third, approximately half of the research studies reviewed involved college samples. Research using college samples and the use of partner violence in dating relationships is an important research area, particularly given the high rates of violence in these samples and evidence showing that psychological aggression predicts physical aggression longitudinally (Murphy & O'Leary, 1989). However, more research is needed using clinical samples to better understand the relationship between masculinity and partner violence in long-term relationships.

Fourth, it is important to reiterate that there may be numerous culturally constructed masculinities; many may include a particular constellation of masculine characteristics and attributes, but some may espouse violence whereas others eschew it. In fact, masculinity may be a frequently evolving construct, even at the individual level, and may involve an interaction between various dimensions of masculinity, such as gender role norms and gender role stress. Because we contend that there are many masculinities based on cultural differences, it would also be important to devise masculinity measures tailored to varying cultural groups (Doss, 1998).

Similarly, it seems important to recognize that the etiology of partner violence is multifactorial, and no singular theory of violence is likely to apply to all violent men (Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994). Masculinity may play a significant role in the etiology of violence for some violent men (e.g., borderline dysphoric) but play a minimal role in the development of violence among other men. Therefore, future research might endeavor to understand the interaction of intrapersonal and situational/contextual factors that might explain the relationship between masculinity and partner violence.

Although there is a substantial body of research demonstrating a strong relationship between substance use and partner violence (see Leonard, 2001, for review), few studies have examined whether substance use mediates the relationship between masculinity and partner violence. Lemle and Mishkind (1989) indicated that alcohol use represented a symbol of masculinity, Isenhart (1993) found that MGRS scores were significantly and positively correlated with alcohol use, and Ray and Gold (1996) found that men scoring high in hypermasculinity reported being more likely to drink liquor than men scoring low in hypermasculinity, especially if the women scored high in hyperfemininity. It may be that masculinity and femininity interact to increase the likelihood of alcohol consumption, which may increase the likelihood of partner violence. Put another way, alcohol consumption may lead to social information-processing deficits among men who may be prone to misinterpret partner behavior as challenging their masculinity, and the combination of these events may increase men's risk for engaging in violent behavior. Alternatively, the relationship between alcohol and partner violence may be a spurious one in which masculinity is manifested through both behaviors (H. Johnson, 2000). Future research should strive to understand the circumstances under which masculinity, substance use, and partner violence may be connected.

Finally, the research findings have implications for interventions with violent men. Research indicates that the efficacy of interventions for men who batter is questionable. Babcock, Green, and Robie (2004) conducted a meta-analysis of 22 batterer intervention studies in which a comparison group was included (e.g., program dropouts, nonequivalent control

group, random assignment to no treatment). They found that the overall effect size (*d*) for batterer interventions was .18. Put in more practical terms, Babcock et al. concluded that women were 5% less likely to be reassaulted by a man who was arrested and referred to a batterer intervention program than by a man who was arrested and sanctioned without intervention. These findings are alarming, particularly given that Gondolf (1988) demonstrated that whether a batterer has sought counseling is the most influential predictor of whether his partner will return to him after leaving a battered women's shelter. Thus, it is imperative to find means of improving batterer treatment outcomes. Although some batterers' intervention programs incorporate the key components of masculinity assessed in this review (e.g., challenging men's beliefs about appropriate male behavior and relationship power), we believe it is important to begin testing the extent to which positive changes in these components of masculinity are related to recidivism. We look forward to future research that examines these questions.

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